



HELFER & BAKER

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# THE SHADOW



SEVEN DEADLY FINNS • Part 6

# SHADOW MANIA

Okay, let's see—

We missed a lettercol last issue (pardon our sarongs, ladies and gentlemen, so here's a little reminder of the things we were talking about here in *Shadowmania: Shadow Team-Ups*. We will also be addressing Kyle Baker's first two issues of work on the *SHADOW* (#8 and #9). Good—with the status quo re-established, it's time to introduce the conflict via your correspondence...

Dear Mike:

I have written previously to this letter column, stating that Bill Sienkiewicz is one of my absolute favorite artists. When I heard that he would be leaving THE SHADOW, the thought of cancelling it off my subscription list at the comic store had well occurred to me. I am sure that this thought had crossed the minds of many of the regular readers of THE SHADOW as well. Now such might result in a big loss of sales to DC. This would be a problem. So in order to help tame the panicking readers, I knew there would be the usual editorial plug to introduce the new talent. It seems that the bigger the talent to be leaving a book, the bigger the plug given to the new talent taking over the title. So when in the pages of THE SHADOW, Sienkiewicz's successor—Kyle Baker—was said to have "what it takes to set the comic world on fire!" I thought to myself, "Yeah, right! What else are they going to say? After all, DC doesn't want to lose all those readers." So when THE SHADOW #8 came out in the local comic book store last Friday, I expected to see a now very average looking title.

Wow! Was I wrong!

Sorry about doubting you guys, it seems that all that was said about Kyle was very sincere indeed. Now, don't I feel like an ass for doubting you so. Please, I ask your forgiveness.

This book still retains the same level of visual excitement and drama as it did when Sienkiewicz was at the reins. That is a huge compliment, coming from as big a Sienkiewicz fan as myself. In other words, from what I have seen so far, I think Kyle Baker is great!

As for SHADOW #8 itself, it looks like it's going to be another fantastic multi-parter, well worth following the very successful "Shadows and Light." I suspect that before this story is over, the Shadow will free the "Prong Murderer" from his police custody. Perhaps he will even become part of the Shadow's organization. After all, the Shadow does have an unusual appreciation for the fellow.

Again, I am very pleased with the course this book is taking. It continues every month to be a great source of reading pleasure. I might even dare say that you have a ground-breaking book here. However, I believe that it will not be until a couple of years down the road, and in retrospect, that the book will be fully appreciated.

Finally, I have changed my position on the Batman crossover idea. No matter how much I thought I might like to see my favorite character in this book, I am now of the feeling that it would only soil the credibility of this comic. It would, as said, increase sales ... but in the long run, the book would do better without such a team-up. If there is to be a crossover at all, I feel that Doc Savage and the Phantom would be better choices.

Thanks for your time.

Michael Moynihan  
20 Varsplain Place N.W.  
Calgary, Alberta  
CANADA T3A 0C7

No, thank you, Michael.

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Shadow Alliance:

The new SHADOW series is a master stroke of comic book noir. *Magnifique! Grandios! Prodigious! Ausstehen! August!* THE SHADOW is the most enjoyable comic I have ever read and well worth the \$1.75 I religiously spend on it every month. I think the greatest compliment I can pay you all—beyond covering you all in polysyllabic polyglot—is that THE SHADOW is the *only* comic I read.

Now with that out of the way—let me say that as a fan of the expertise behind THE SHADOW, I normally wouldn't write, my philosophy being that with the talent you all possess there is not much that you can do wrong. And as for the fan mail I would just as soon see you all putting out the next issue of THE SHADOW than reading my letter.

Normally.

I am writing this letter mostly to address this Shadow/Team-up Schund. Kill this Shadow/Team-up animal now. Team-ups and crossovers would ruin the atmosphere of THE SHADOW. You have a good thing going with THE SHADOW; don't destroy it.

Benton Tucker  
7109 Buchanan Street  
Landover Hills, MD 20784

You left out Ellsway in your little lesson in languages foreign, Benton—but thanks for all the kind words you did use (we like to think they all translate

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into kind words, at least). Also, even with all the talent you say is lounging around this title, we still managed to mess up having a letter column last issue! Oh, well.

Consider your vote counted in the great Shadow/Team-up debate, Benton, and thanks for writing—'cause reading the mail never kept us from getting an issue to the stands (Helfer always comes up with better excuses than that)!

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Andy, Mike and Kyle:

THE SHADOW #8 wasn't my first exposure to Kyle Baker's artwork. I'd seen his inks in various Marvel titles and his full art in *Codename: Danger*. I enjoyed his art whenever I saw it and was glad that he was finally getting a regular series. However, I had become so accustomed to Bill Sienkiewicz's renditions of the Shadow and his agents that I wasn't sure I could adjust so quickly to another artist's interpretations. I was wrong. THE SHADOW is still as exciting as rock and roll.

Stylistically, Kyle and Bill are at opposite ends of the spectrum. Sienkiewicz's art is highly expressionistic, giving a wildly exaggerated sense of action and character. Baker is almost photorealistic. He's much more hard-edged, less organic than Bill—yet still different than Howard Chaykin and Marshall Rogers, two other realistic SHADOW artists. He's great! So far, this series has yet to disappoint. Let's hope that Kyle Baker sticks around for a few years.

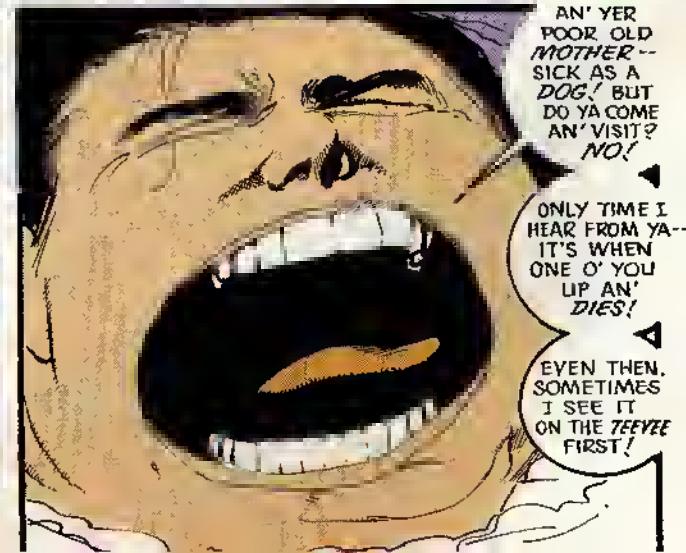
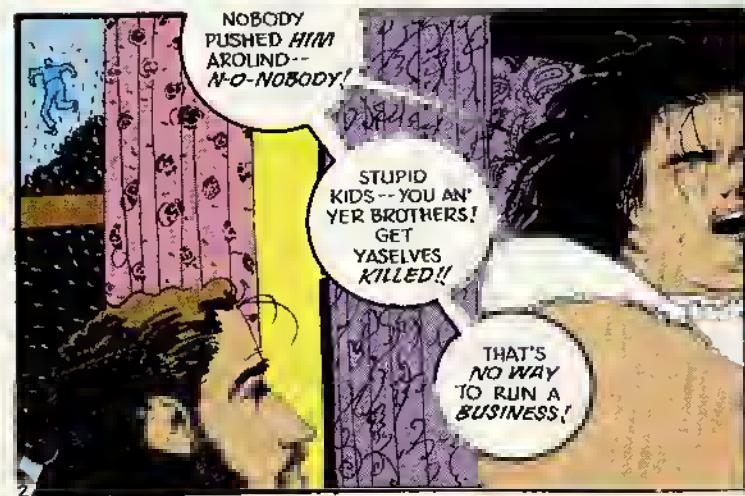
This story looks like it's off to a good start. The Shadow's methodical march through the prostitutes and pimps and the following destruction of the blockhouse was fantastic. And exactly what the character would have done in the Thirties, if these conditions had existed back then, I've heard a lot of hue and cry among fans about the revival and updating of the Shadow. Personally, I'm glad to see him appearing regularly. After all, he was incredibly popular for, what, more than fifteen years? So why should he be any less popular today? And, as for updating him, the only reason the original stories were set in the Thirties and Forties was because that's when they were written. Today's Shadow stories should not be any less contemporary.

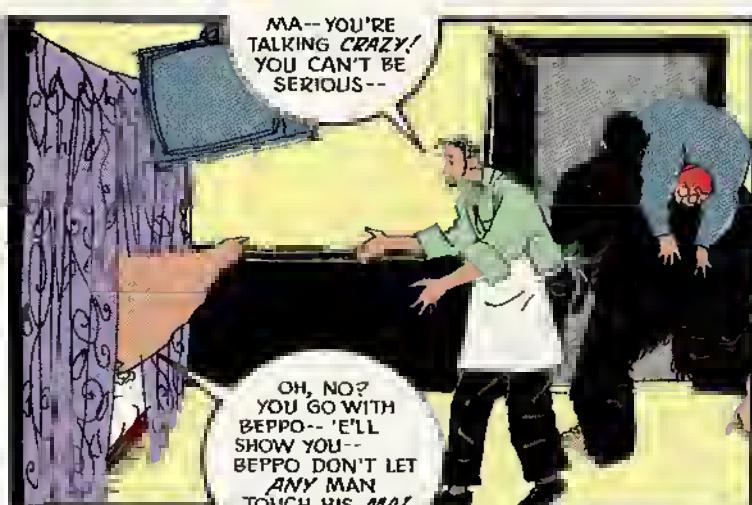
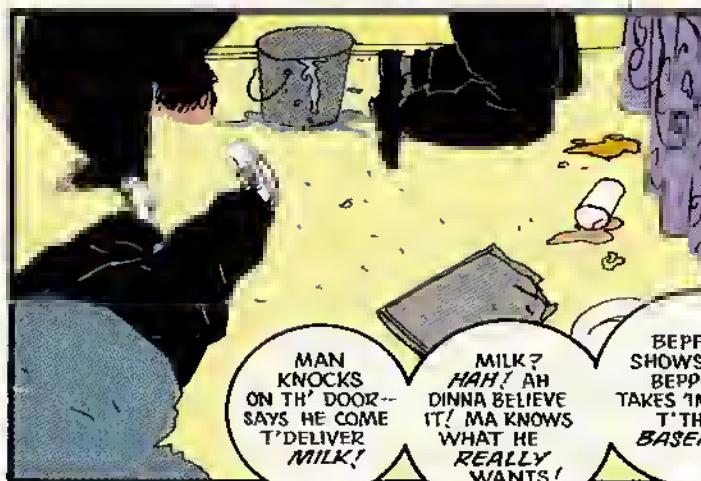
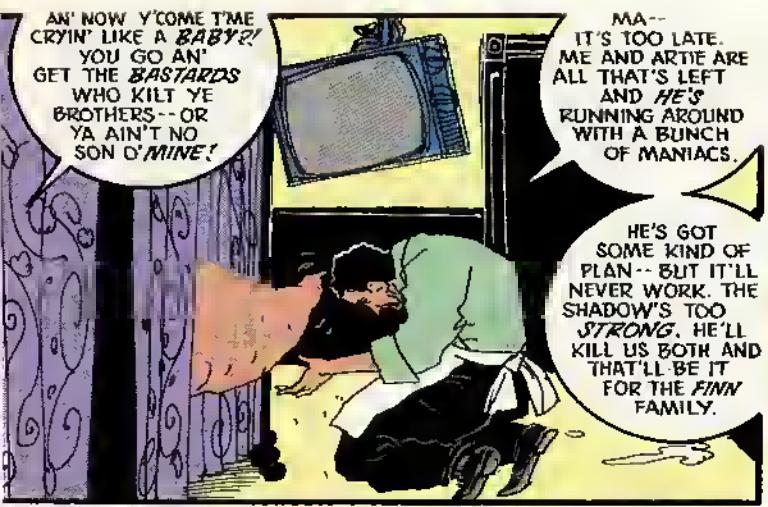
Anyway, I was talking about this month's plot. It makes perfect sense for the Shadow to let the Prong Killer get away. After all, the man was after men

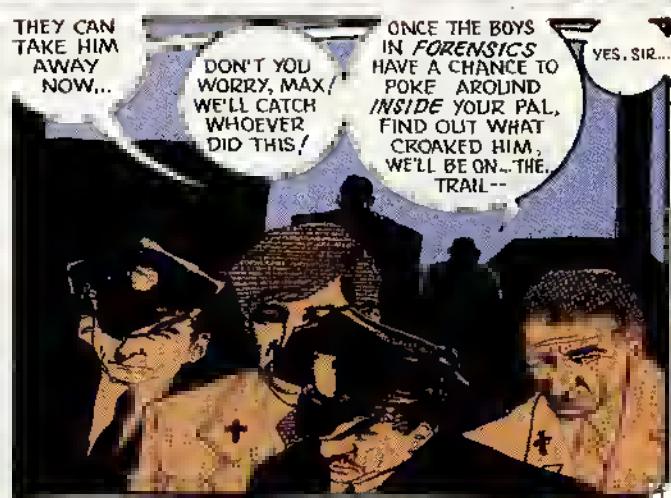
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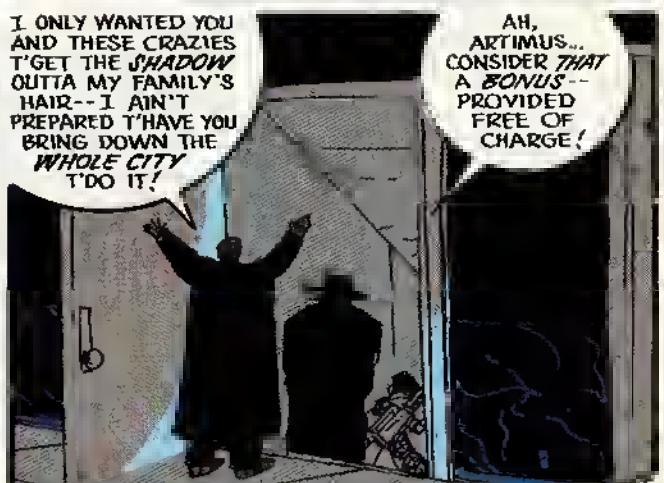


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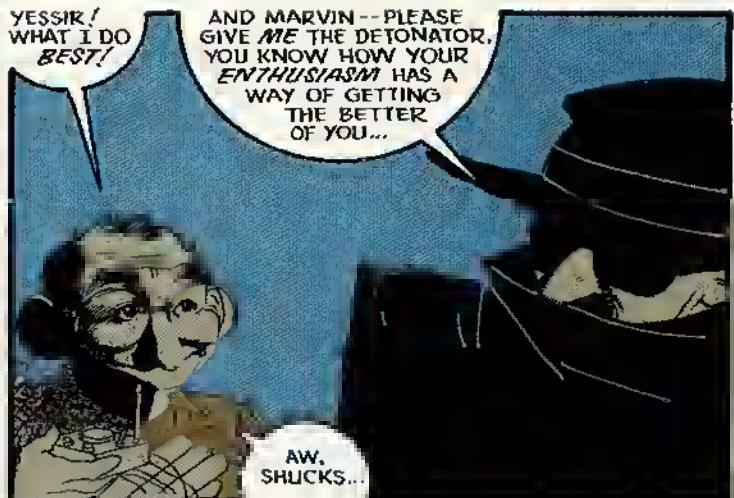
LOOK WELL, MY AGENTS. THE VERY FOUNDATION OF THE GREATEST MONUMENT TO CAPITALIST, GODLESS AMERICA SPRAWS OUT BEFORE YOU.

BUT BEFORE THIS NIGHT IS OVER, WE WILL SHAKE IT, AND WHAT IT STANDS FOR, TO THE GROUND!

MARVIN-- YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO.

YESSIR! WHAT I DO BEST!

AND MARVIN -- PLEASE GIVE ME THE DETONATOR. YOU KNOW HOW YOUR ENTHUSIASM HAS A WAY OF GETTING THE BETTER OF YOU...



NOW, THEN-- AS MARVIN COMPLETES THE MINING OF THE STRUCTURAL SUPPORTS, WE WILL BEGIN OUR NEXT PHASE.

ARTIMUS--?



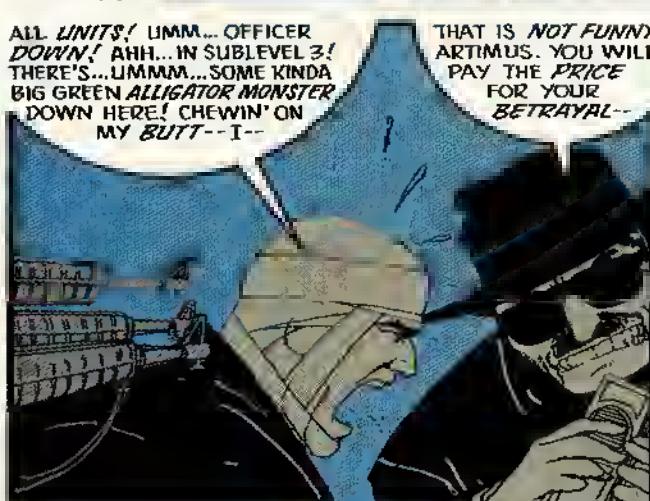
HEY, NO WAY--FROM HERE ON IN, I'M JUST AN OBSERVER, OKAY?

I AM AFRAID NOT. I NEED YOUR VOICE-- ONLY YOUR NATIVE NEW YORK DIALECT CAN CONVINCE THE OTHER GUARDS THAT YOU ARE ONE OF THEM--

ONLY YOU CAN BRING THEM TO US. DO NOT FORCE MY HAND, ARTIMUS. DO IT.



AW, SHUCKS...



THAT IS NOT FUNNY, ARTIMUS. YOU WILL PAY THE PRICE FOR YOUR BETRAYAL--



AKKK!! ROGER, UNIT ONE-- WE READ YOU! ALL UNITS--ASSEMBLE AND CONVERGE ON SUBLEVEL 3!

AMAZING. THEY BELIEVED IT.

PAR FOR THE COURSE, I GUESS...



AGENTS-- POSITION YOURSELVES. GET READY...  
... AIM--





WE'LL  
GET THEM,  
LITTLE  
BUDDY...I  
SWEAR  
IT...

WHEN THE OLD-TIMERS  
GOT KILLED, IT DIDN'T  
REALLY HURT...THEY  
WERE BEFORE MY  
TIME...

BUT YOU, TWITCH...YOU  
WERE LIKE KIN...WE HAD  
SOME *WILD* TIMES  
TOGETHER...AND EVEN  
WHEN I HAD TO ARREST  
YOU, YOU NEVER LOST  
YOUR SENSE OF  
HUMOR...

FORENSICS

...

—SIGH...  
THEY WERE  
GOOD TIMES  
TWITCH...

...AND NOW  
I'VE GOT TO  
TELL THE OTHERS  
THOSE TIMES  
ARE GONE  
FOR GOOD...

OH  
MY  
GOD.

HOW?

MAVIS—  
BRACE  
YOURSELF.  
I'VE GOT  
BAD NEWS...

SMALL CONSOLATION. GET THE  
AUTOPSY REPORT. THAT WILL GIVE  
US A PLACE TO START--

HARUMMPH...

UHH...  
SORRY TO  
INTERRUPT YOU,  
SON, BUT  
WE'RE READY  
TO GET  
UNDER WAY.

RIGHT.  
GOTTA GO, MAS--  
UHH--MAV. CALL YOU  
AS SOON AS WE  
FIND OUT ANYTHING--

WHERE'S GWEN  
SOMEBODY'S  
GOT TO TELL  
HER--

SHE'S GOT  
AN EXHIBITION  
MATCH AT THE  
GARDEN TONIGHT--  
A 4-H  
FUNDRAISER...

WE'LL HANDLE HER  
WHEN SHE RETURNS.  
UNTIL THEN, WE MUST  
REDOUBBLE OUR EFFORTS  
TO RID THIS CITY OF  
THE PLAGUE OF THE  
FINN FAMILY.

WE ARE  
TOO CLOSE  
TO STOP  
NOW.

IT'S A  
**JUNGLE OUT THERE!**



# Animal Man

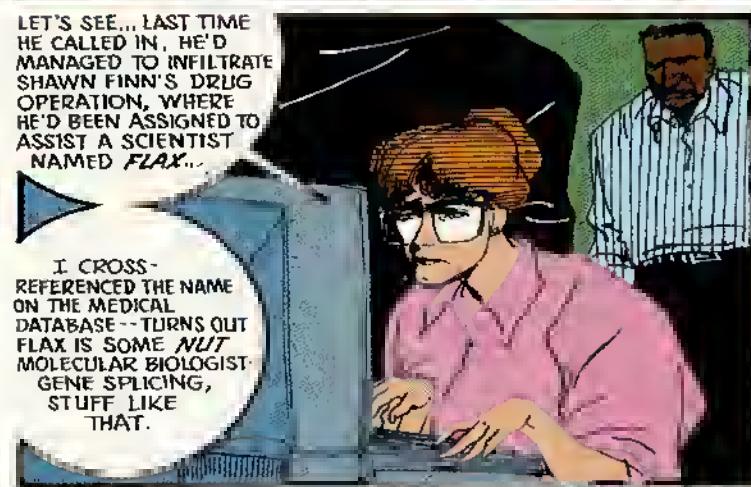
New Format monthly series  
Starting in May  
Covers by Brian Bolland

Grant Morrison  
Chas Truog  
Doug Hazlewood





LET'S SEE... LAST TIME HE CALLED IN, HE'D MANAGED TO INFILTRATE SHAWN FINN'S DRUG OPERATION, WHERE HE'D BEEN ASSIGNED TO ASSIST A SCIENTIST NAMED FLAX...



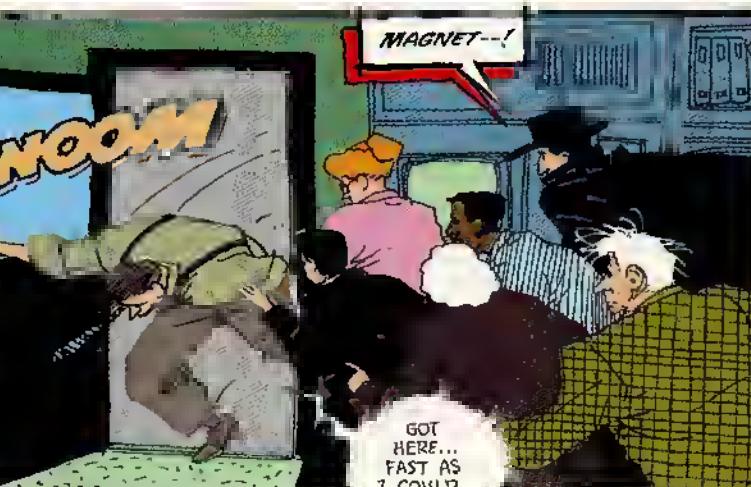
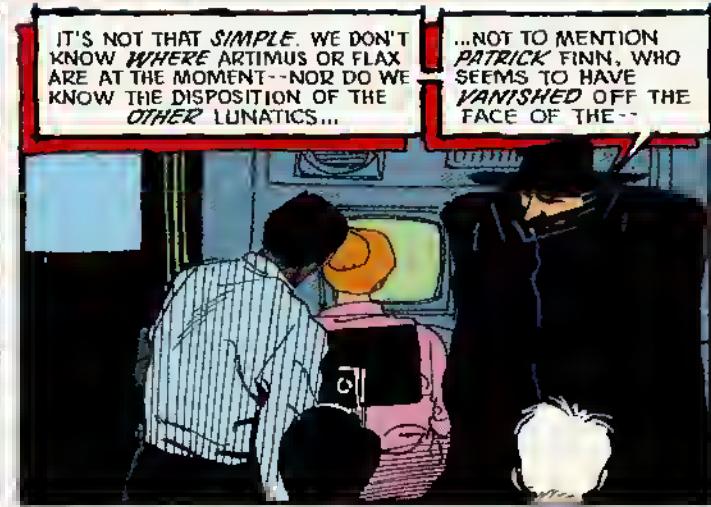
GUY GOT A KICK OUT OF WHIPPING UP KILLER MICROBES -- FIRST FOR THE GOVERNMENT, THEN FOR PLAIN, GOOD OLD RECREATIONAL USE --

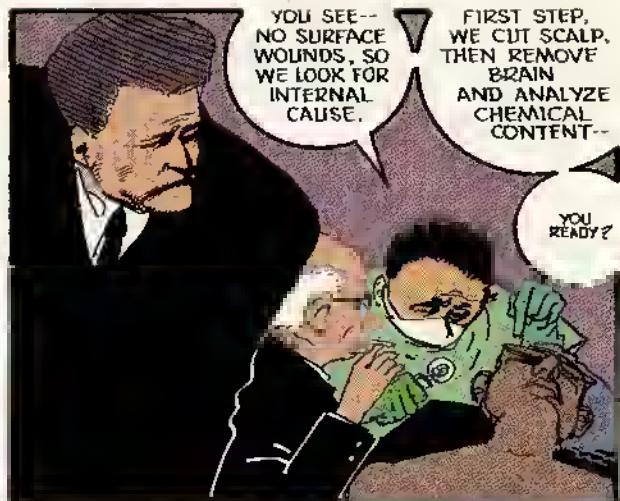
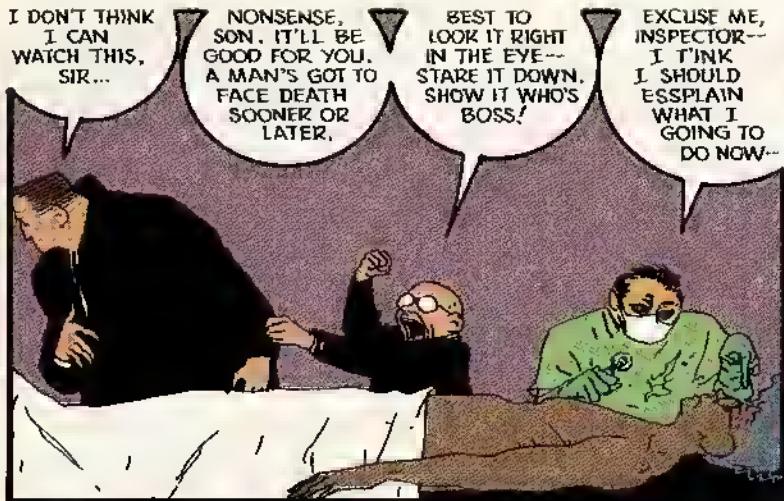


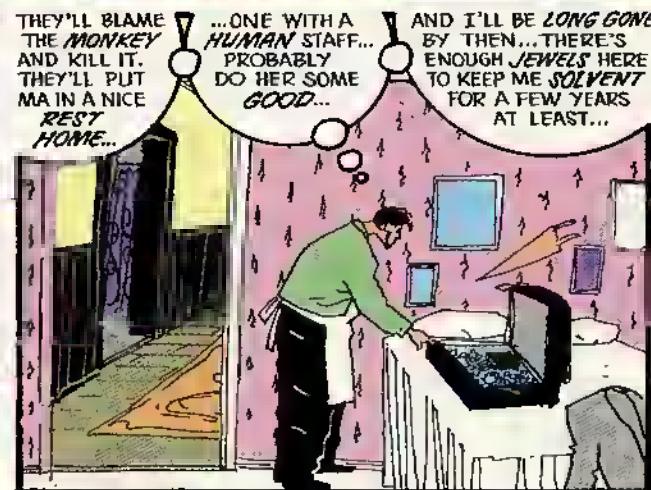
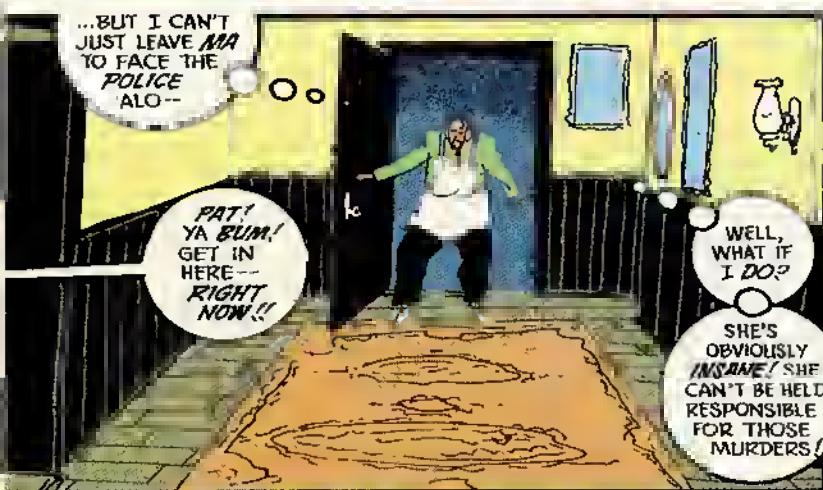
RIGHT. WELL, THEY PUT HIM AWAY FOR THAT STUFF -- AND HE'D BEEN IN THE PSYCHO WING AT DOWNTOWN -- UNTIL HE GOT BROKEN OUT OF THE PLACE BY --



WELL, WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR -- LET'S GET THAT S.O.B. BEFORE HE --







MORE THAN MEN...LESS THAN GODS

# THE NEW GUARDIANS

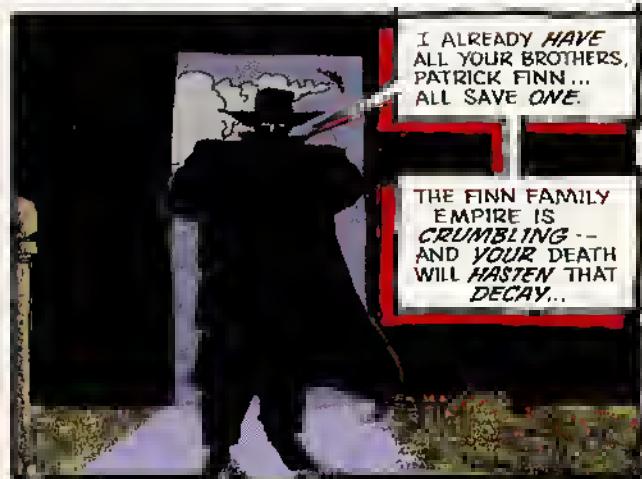


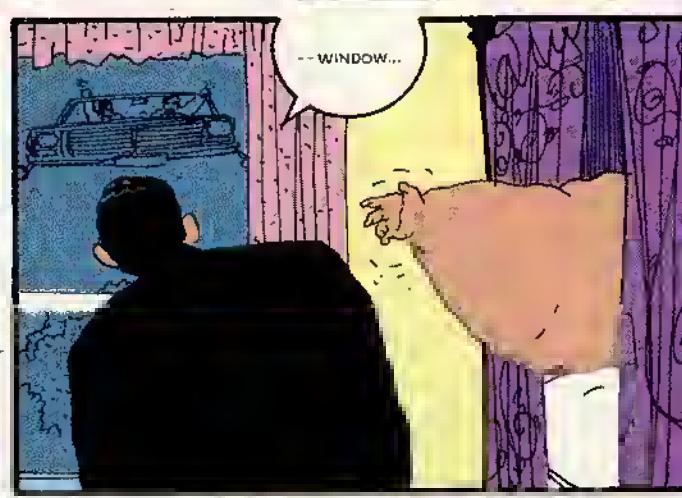
Chosen to  
save mankind  
from itself

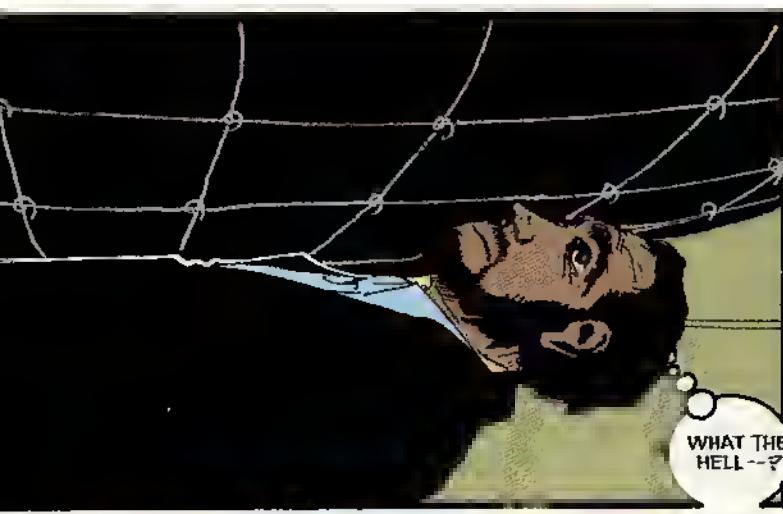
From the creators  
of **MILLENNIUM™**

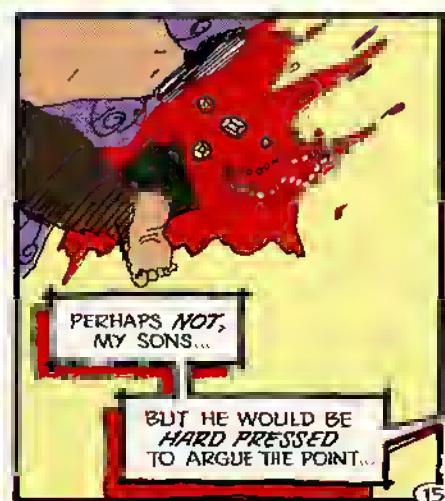
Englehart • Staton • Farmer  
A New Format ongoing series  
Beginning in June

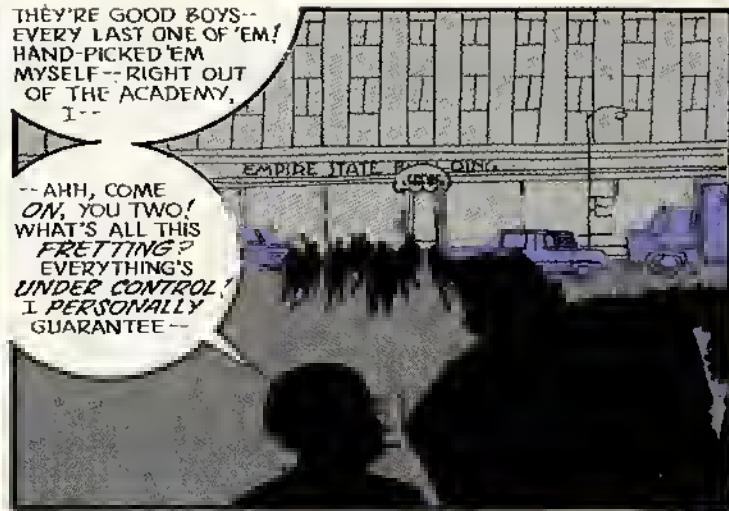


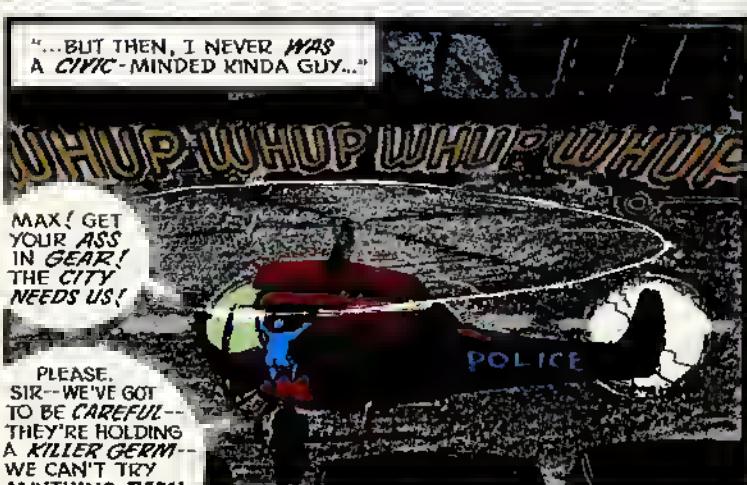
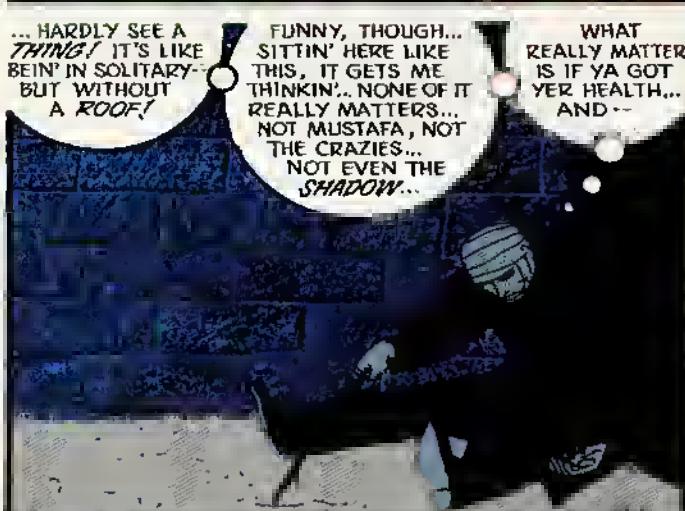












# 88 ANNUALS

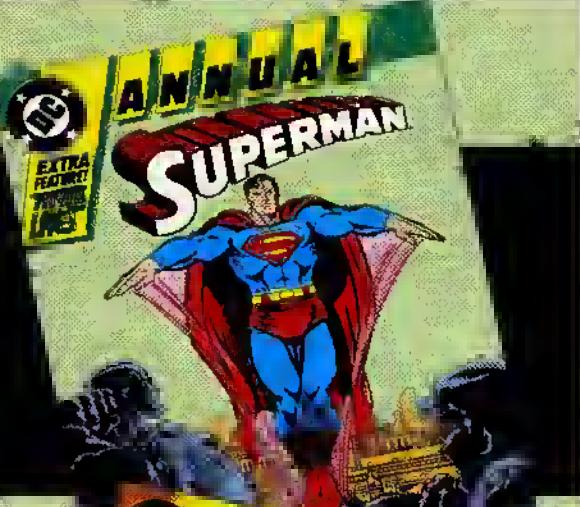


## **SUPERMAN ANNUAL #12**

Superman and the Guardian must rescue the adults that once formed the Newsboy Legion from Sleez's malevolent grasp!

Stern Frenz Breeding

AVAILABLE IN APRIL

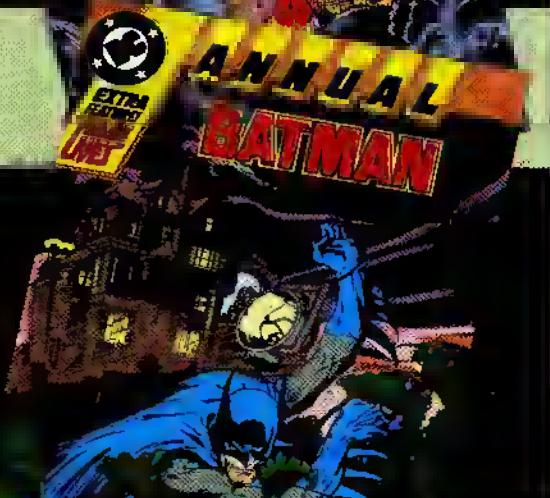


## **BATMAN ANNUAL #12**

Batman hunts two foes—a ruthless killer and something that may not be human! Can he catch them in time to prevent tragic history from repeating itself?

Baron Andru Rodier

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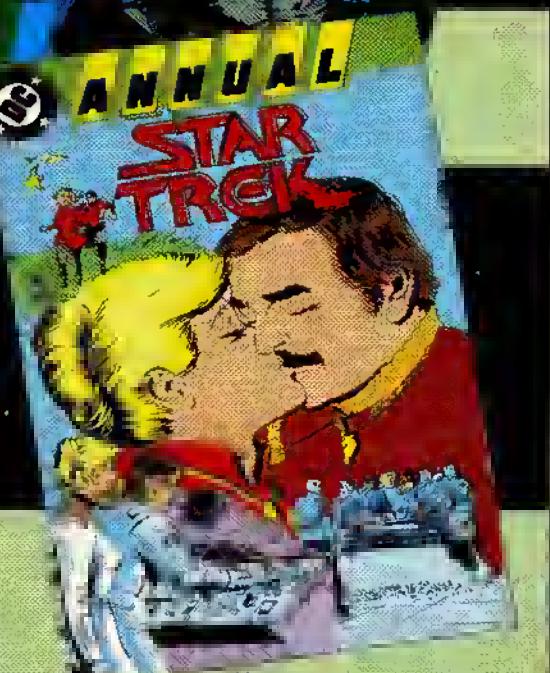


## **STAR TREK ANNUAL #3**

A glimpse into Scotty's past, as writer Peter David reveals the facts behind the greatest love of Scotty's life!

David Swan Villagran

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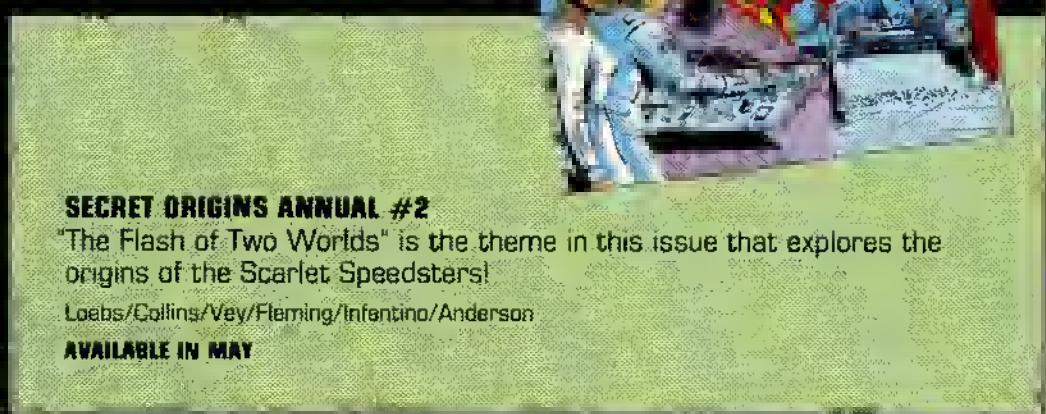


## **SECRET ORIGINS ANNUAL #2**

"The Flash of Two Worlds" is the theme in this issue that explores the origins of the Scarlet Speedsters!

Loeb/Collins/Vey/Fleming/Infantino/Anderson

AVAILABLE IN MAY



SOON HE  
WILL COME...  
AND WE WILL  
DESTROY HIM.  
AND THEN...  
THE REST OF  
THEM. ALL  
OF THEM.

ONE BY ONE,  
THEIR LUNGS WILL  
GROW RIPE WITH THE  
GOOD DOCTOR'S GERMS.  
THEN THEY WILL DIE...  
BY THE THOUSANDS...  
BY THE  
MILLIONS...

THE  
KILLING WINDS  
WILL MAKE THEIR  
MARK... FOREVER  
WIPE THE SELF-SECURE  
SMIRK OFF THE FACE  
OF  
IMPERIALIST  
AMERICA!

THEN--  
WE RELEASE  
MY PRECIOUS  
GERMZ.  
NOW--?  
NO, DOCTOR-- I STILL HAVE A  
DEBT OF HONOR TO PAY!  
I PROMISED ARTIMUS FINN  
THE SHADOW WOULD DIE  
BY OUR HAND-- THE  
WORLD MUST WAIT  
FOR ITS REWARD  
UNTIL THEN!

LEYLAND--  
HANDLE THIS.

NOW,  
TO BAIT  
THE TRAP...

IT IS READY,  
MASTER.  
THE ANTENNA  
IS LINKED  
TO THE  
TRANSMITTER.

GOOD,  
PREPARE  
YOURSSELVES...  
DESTINY  
KNOCKS.

GREETINGS, AMERICA. THIS  
IS THE VOICE OF TERROR--  
A TERROR POISED  
TO DESTROY YOU ALL.  
AND WE SHALL--

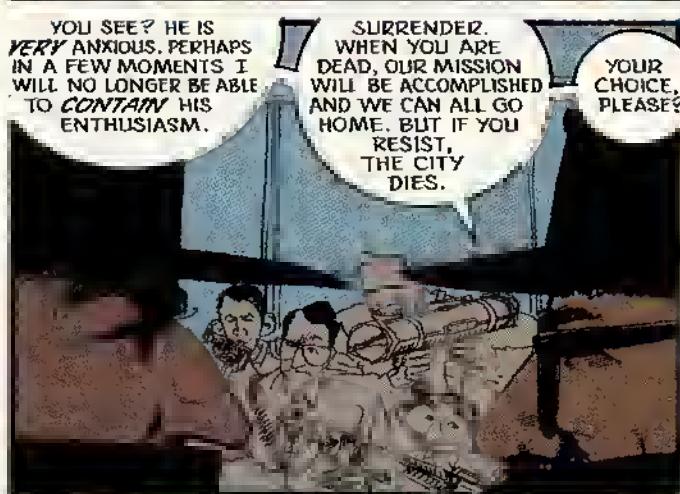
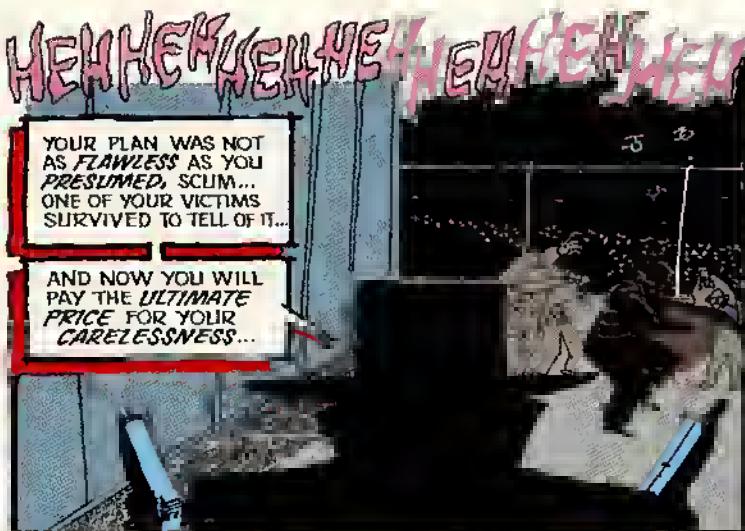
--UNLESS  
THE SHADOW  
HIMSELF  
COMES TO US--  
TO FACE US  
DEATH.

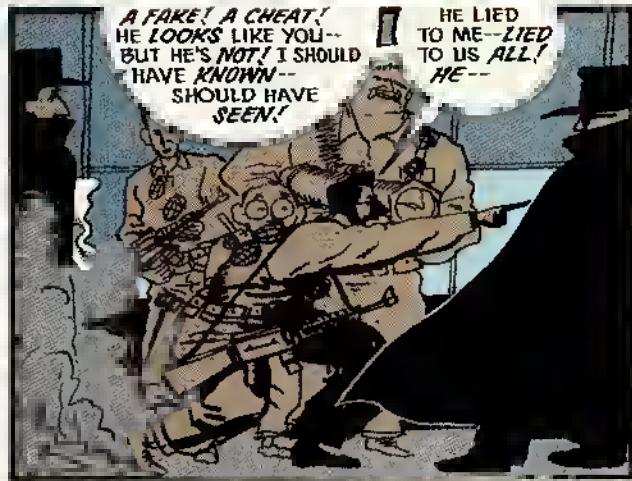
A FAIR  
WARNING TO OTHERS.  
ANY INTERVENTION BY  
POLICE WILL CAUSE THE  
IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF A  
DEADLY TOXIN INTO THE  
AIR OVER NEW--

--WHA--?!  
POLICE?!  
HERE--  
ALREADY?!  
BUT--  
HOW COULD THEY  
KNOW  
WE WERE HERE  
BEFORE  
OUR BROADCAST  
EVEN BEGAN?!

AHH...  
THE OTHERS  
FLEE.  
COWARDS.

BUT STILL...  
I WONDER HOW  
THEY KNEW--



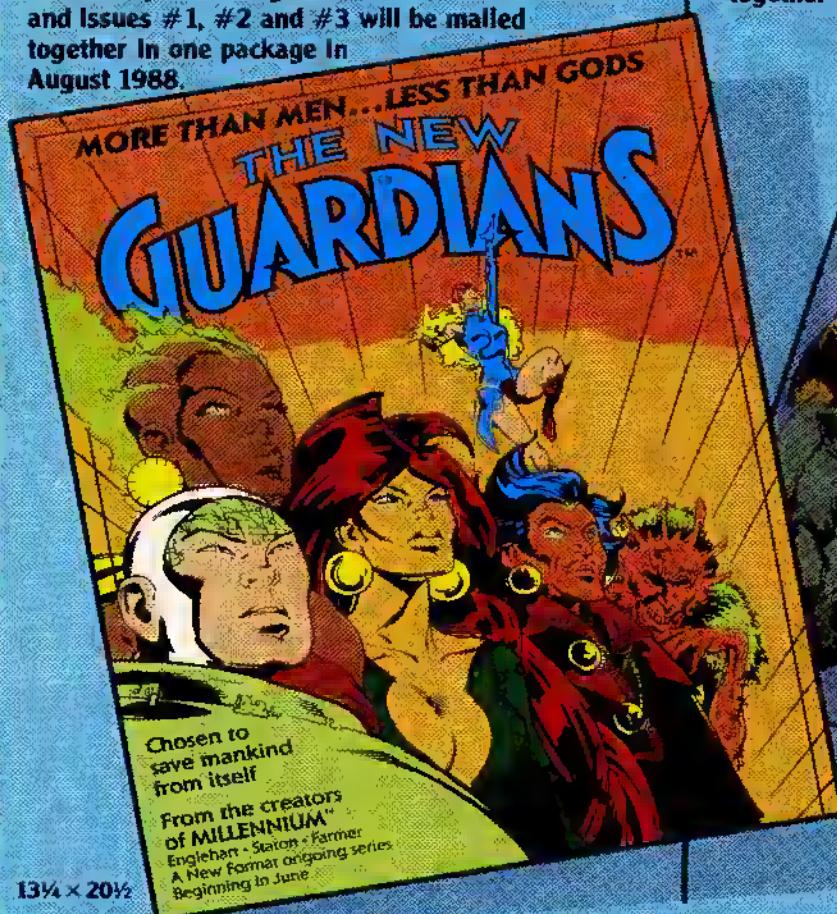


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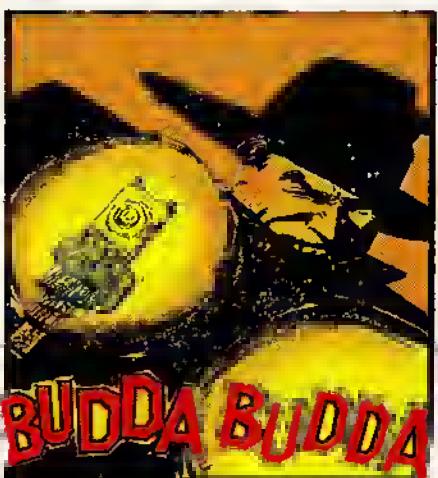
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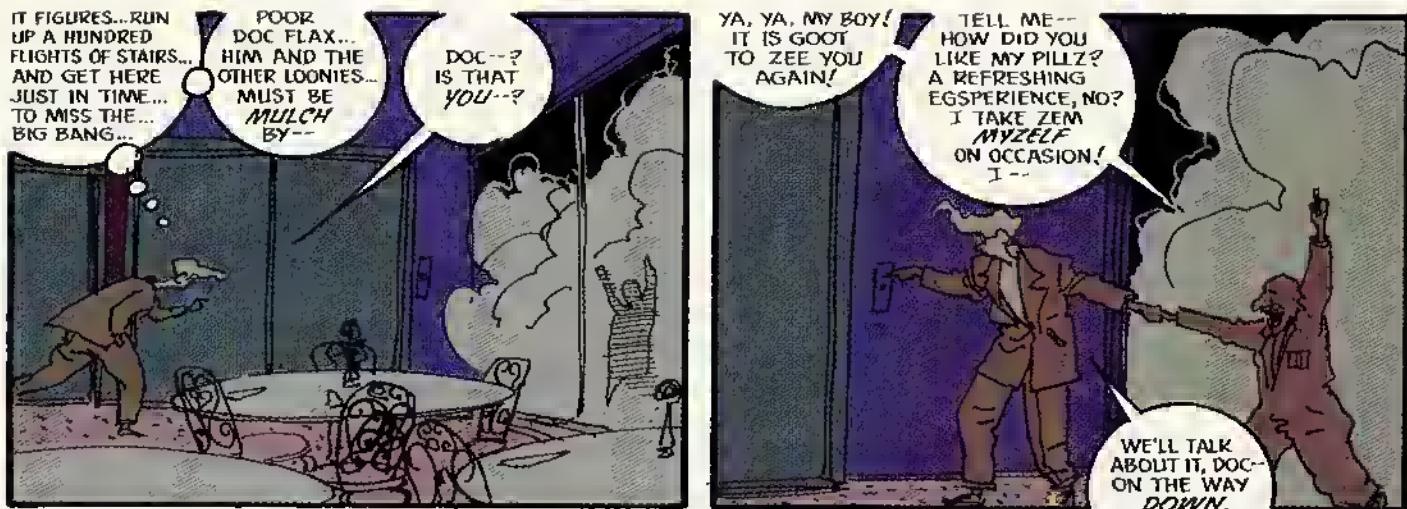
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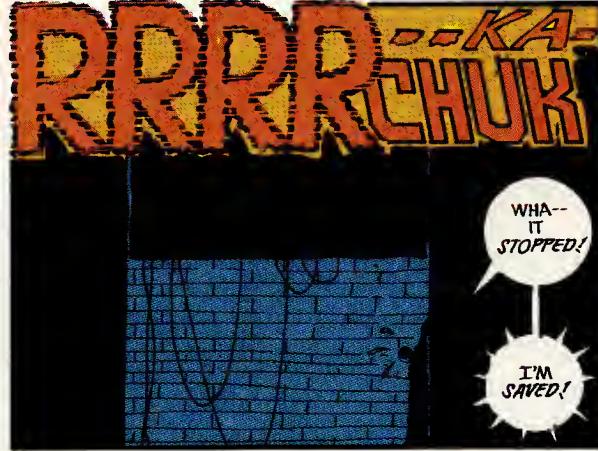
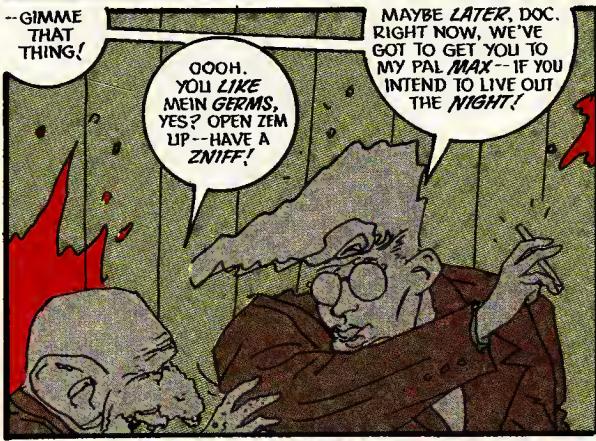
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State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

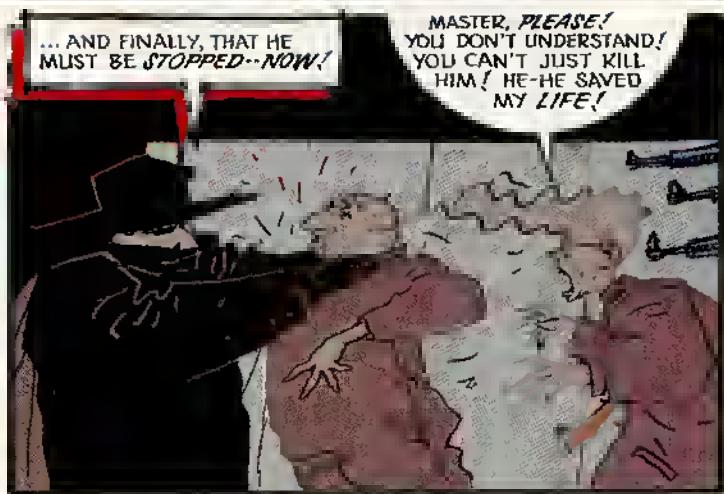


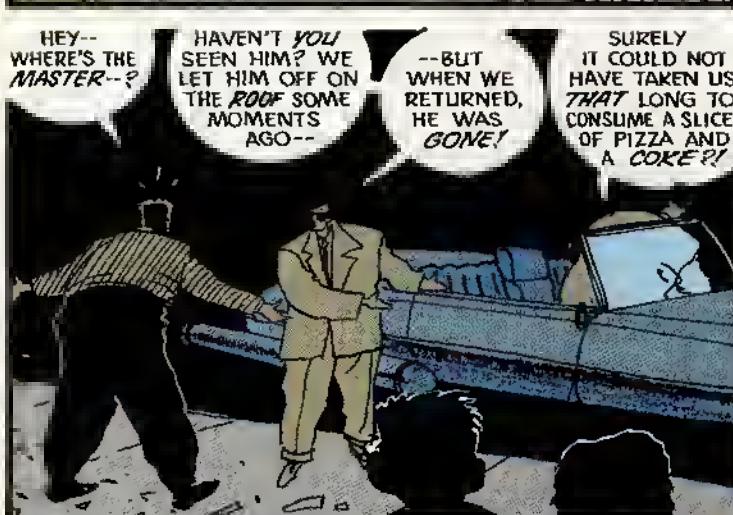
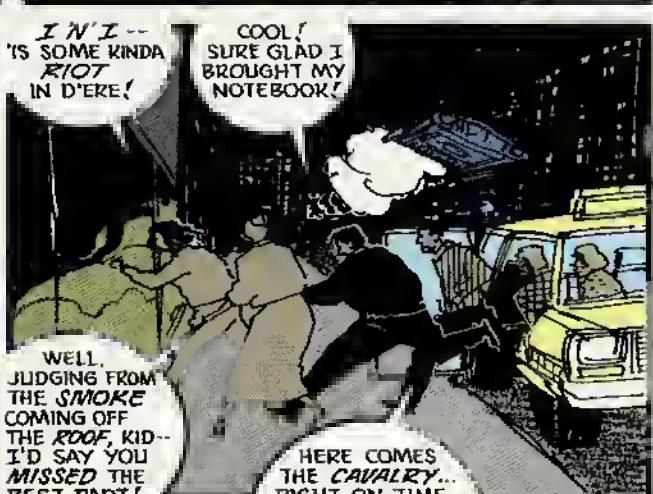
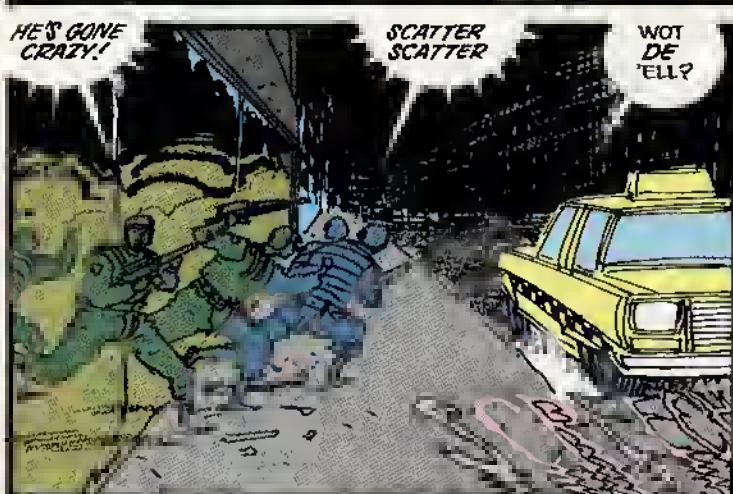












HE-HE'S DEAD.

THE SEVEN DEADLY FINNS: CONCLUSION

# FINNALE!

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KYLE BAKER  
ARTIST

BOB LAPPAN  
LETTERER

TOM ZIUKO  
COLORIST

RENÉE WITTERSTAETTER  
ASSISTANT EDITOR

MIKE CARLIN  
EDITOR

the Shadow would have eventually caught up to anyway, right? So if the Prong Killer was doing what the Shadow would have done, he must have been doing the right thing in the Shadow's mind, right? The Shadow knows, doesn't he? One element of Andy's SHADOW plots that I especially like is the way he starts off with seemingly unconnected stories and eventually brings them together. This is starting already with the prong attack on Errol Finn (hail! I am looking forward to seeing how "Seven Deadly Finns" develops.

The way you're portraying the agents is certainly an improvement—even over the original books. THE SHADOW is very much a team book—filled with interesting players ... though the Shadow himself should always dominate his people. While some of the older agents—like Margo and Harry—could have understandably developed independent streaks over the course of 30 years, the newer agents should remain loyal above all else. Let's see some of the backgrounds of the new agents, and what makes them serve the Master with such unequalled dedication.

Finally, thanks for creating the cover format and story format that you've given this series. Richard Bruning's work? By producing a series of long, fairly complete and self-contained stories—and by identifying them by title on the covers—you have given the series the feel of a series of novels, instead of the usual ongoing, endless story.

Oh, and cast my vote for no team-ups—except with Doc Savage, and only then if you have a good story.

Andrew M. Kaplan  
Student Mailroom  
Antioch College

Yellow Springs, OH 45387

*Oh, it'll be a good one, all right, Andrew—whoops...*

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Dear Editor:

Issue #8 of THE SHADOW brings us Kyle Baker. Not a really great artist, but a touch above the sometimes indecipherable Bill Sienkiewicz. If he gets better with age, then you could have something here. Look at page 10 and the last page—just a glaring eye in a dark black panel—that is how the Shadow is supposed to look, and it's the type of panel that Mike Kaluta made a big splash with during the Shadow's last DC run. This Baker fellow does have possibilities.

On page 13, we see a fat, slothlike crook. That's always a good target for a decent artist. He grinds down his victims in the frankfurter vat (There was once a Chicago wife-killer who did just that in the gay Nineties, so it's not all that far out). We see a terrified punk/crook named Virgil—and the creeping shadow of ... guess who! Baker seems to have a flare for wide-open mouths. His best panels all have "Weirdo Mouths."

Shadow and Doc Savage together? I don't know. Doc seems too much of a

gentleman for the Shadow, they're like oil and water. Batman would be better—he's meaner.

Charles D. Brown  
39 Stockton Street  
Brentwood, NY 11717

*Shadow and Doc Savage together? Who says they have to be together in a team-up? Couldn't one guy just visit the other guy's title, do his deeds and go? Really—what if the Shadow were dead and—whoops, again!*

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Dear Andy and Kyle:

"Seeing red" was great. Very simple plot—but lots of openings to make it more complicated later.

Kyle Baker's art is terrific. What can I say about the cover? It sent a chill through me when I first glanced at it in my comic shop. One problem though. In earlier issues, the coloring was dark and mysterious—the way it should be—but in SHADOW #8 it seemed too bright, like a rainbow. Please, I don't think the coloring quite fits the mood of this comic.

On page 25, the Shadow says, "Prepare to die, murderer." Hmm, think about that for a while. Get my drift? I have no objections to the way the Shadow operates, it's just that he is a murderer, too. Perhaps he kills with a sense of justice—but he still kills. I found this to be quite hypocritical.

One other question. Why is this comic for mature readers? I don't see anything wrong with it except for the blood and killing. And there really isn't that much of it.

Thanks for your time,

Josh Abrams  
State College, PA 16803

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Dear Shadowmaniacs,

I love the current incarnation of the Shadow. In fact, it was through your comics that I discovered the Shadow fifteen years ago (no way, it can't be that long ago). I remember all the ads that proudly proclaimed that "the Shadow is coming," and going to the local 7-Eleven two or three times a day every day for weeks searching for that premiere issue. Then that grand and glorious day arrived, and my heart beat a martial cadence as I furiously pedaled my bike home to devour that first issue. Oh, how I devoured it. I read it forward and backward. My buddy John Dickerson and I drooled over the dark, gloomy, wonderful art by Mike Kaluta, and our ten-year-old brains were transplanted back to the Thirties. I clearly remember sitting on John's porch with a portable cassette recorder late that summer and recording our own radio play of that first issue, "The Doom Puzzle."

Not much more than a year ago, I happened on Howard Chaykin's new Shadow mini-series. I experienced nearly the same feeling of exhilaration as I did that hot August afternoon in 1973. I likewise devoured the series and waited patiently for the ongoing series.

It was worth the wait! Upon reading it every month, I break into a cold sweat and begin to foam at the mouth. The writing is first class, and the art ... mmmmm. I was severely disappointed when Bill Sienkiewicz left, but when I saw Kyle Baker's art on the latest two issues ... well, I nearly became unglued. Never since Kaluta has anyone so perfectly captured the spirit and mood of the Shadow. Just as Kaluta evoked the New York of the Thirties, Baker conjures visions of 1988 New York: dark, moody, sinister. My compliments, Kyle. Next to Kaluta, you are the definitive Shadow artist.

Now that I've finished reminiscing and kissing up (not that y'all don't deserve it, though), I've got a few questions:

1) Chaykin established the fact that the Shadow is Kent Allard, who "killed" Lamont Cranston and assumed his identity. However, in the first series, in issue #8, Cranston is shown to be alive and is one of the Shadow's agents, who allows the Shadow to borrow his identity when he sees fit. In that issue, Allard is shown to be a separate person. Since the *real* Cranston was "dead" at the time, how is it that he and Allard are shown as being two different people? Please don't cop out and say that the first series is not included in the present continuity.

2) At the end of the mini-series, Harry and Margo are shown necking in the background while the Shadow is telling his sons that he plans to stay in America. They have just helped the Shadow do away with Mayrock/Cranston. But in the first issue of the current series, they believe, as do most of the other agents, that the Shadow has been severely injured. Since they were in on the case, wouldn't they have known that the injured party was in fact the Cranston clone?

Well, I guess this has been a little long-winded, but I'm almost done. Just a few requests. *Don't* do any Shadow team-ups, unless they are with Doc Savage or The Avenger. *Do* make a second series or limited series of the Shadow's 1930s and 1940s exploits. *Do* reprint the 1970s series in a deluxe format (at least the Kaluta issues). *Do* try to get Mike Kaluta back for at least an issue or two, or next year's annual. *Don't* ever lose Kyle Baker. And lastly, *do* keep up the excellent work. You've got a reader for life. Later, dudes.

Mark G. Reznicek  
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San Antonio, TX 78250

Answers:

1) Weren't there some kind of clones involved in Chaykin's series, Mark?

2) Pretty much only Twitch was under the impression that the Shadow was injured. The others didn't believe it—but their concern stemmed from the knowledge that where the Shadow is concerned, ya never know...

NEXT ISSUE: The Shadow is dead. Period.

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